

Statement on H. RES. 1370 Calling on the Government of the People's Republic of China to immediately end abuses of the human rights of its citizens

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Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution, which is yet another meaningless but provocative condemnation of China . It is this kind of jingoism that has led to such a low opinion of the United States abroad. Certainly I do not condone human rights abuses, wherever they may occur, but as Members of the US House of Representatives we have no authority over the Chinese government. It is our Constitutional responsibility to deal with abuses in our own country or those created abroad by our own foreign policies. Yet we are not debating a bill to close Guantanamo , where abuses have been documented. We are not debating a bill to withdraw from Iraq , where scores of innocents have been killed, injured, and abused due to our unprovoked attack on that country. We are not debating a bill to reverse the odious FISA bill passed recently which will result in extreme abuses of Americans by gutting the Fourth Amendment.

Instead of addressing these and scores of other pressing issues over which we do have authority, we prefer to spend our time criticizing a foreign government over which we have no authority and foreign domestic problems about which we have very little accurate information.

I do find it ironic that this resolution "calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China to begin earnest negotiations, without preconditions, directly with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives." For years US policy has been that no meeting or negotiation could take place with Iran until certain preconditions are met by Iran . Among these is a demand that Iran cease uranium enrichment, which Iran has the right to do under the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is little wonder why some claim that resolutions like this are hypocritical.

Instead of lecturing China, where I have no doubt there are problems as there are everywhere, I would suggest that we turn our attention to the very real threats in a United States where our civil liberties and human rights are being eroded on a steady basis. The Bible cautions against pointing out the speck in a neighbor's eye while ignoring the log in one's own. I suggest we contemplate this sound advice before bringing up such ill-conceived resolutions in the future.